

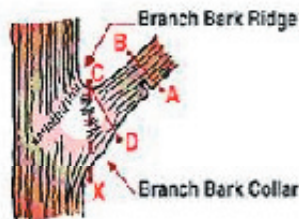


PROPER PRUNING GUIDELINES

Proper pruning of trees and shrubs is essential to creating and maintaining an effective defensible space. These basic pruning guidelines are essential to promoting tree health and keeping decay and rot from expanding into the main trunk of the tree.

In order to make a proper pruning cut, first locate the branch collar (see the diagram below). Branches should be pruned using a series of three cuts:

1. The first cut is to the underside of the branch, approximately 8-10 inches from the tree's trunk, and goes less than half way through the branch creating a notch. See the notch just below point A on the diagram. The purpose of this cut is to prevent the bark from ripping down the side of the tree when the branch falls.
2. The second cut is made an inch or two further out from the first cut (along line A-B on the diagram below). Begin the cut at point B working towards point A.
3. The third and final cut removes the remaining stump. Begin the cut at point C working towards point D as depicted in the diagram below, being careful not to cut into either the branch bark ridge or the branch collar.



First Cut - Notch A

Second Cut - Along Line A-B

Third Cut - Along Line C-D

DO NOT CUT ALONG LINE C-X

In addition to defensible space guidelines, we recommend the following:

DOs

- Do look for any limbs that might be a hazard to someone underneath it or to a building or structure nearby. Broken branches, weak branches, narrow crotch angles and other obvious faults should be identified and taken care of first.
- Do remove any dead or dying material on the tree.
- Do remove limbs that are rubbing each other or cross over one another. Limbs that rub will develop wounds that attract insects and diseases.
- Do remove excessive vertical sprouts (stems that rise vertically from branches). Some may need to be left in place to encourage caliper (trunk thickness / diameter) growth.
- Do choose to keep branches with wide crotch angles (from 40 to 90 degrees), since these are very strong as a result of being composed of solid wood.
- Do keep in mind that you should always have a reason for every cut that is made.

DO NOTs

- Do not top your tree.
- Do not leave a portion of the branch sticking out (stub cuts). This allows rot to enter more easily.
- Do not remove all of the lower limbs on newly planted trees. Some of the lower branches should be left intact for a period of time to encourage caliper (trunk thickness / diameter) growth.
- Do not remove more than one-third of the top growth on younger trees.
- Do not make cuts flush with the trunk or adjoining limb. The proper cut is made flush with the collar at the base of the branch (see diagram above). The collar zone contains chemically protective tissue. If it is cut off or severely cut into, proper natural 'healing' cannot occur. And once this area is damaged, it is damaged for good.